

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-18 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 14 and 16-18 are amended. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The courtesies extended to Applicant's representative by Examiner Chapman in the telephone interviews held June 27 and 28, are appreciated. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below and constitute Applicants' record of the interviews. During the interviews, the language in the claim amendments was discussed.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-18 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph. The Office Action also rejects claims 1-18 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. As discussed during the telephone interviews, claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 14 and 16-18 are amended, without narrowing the claim scope, to obviate the rejection. All of the amended features are clearly supported by the specification and thus do not introduce any new matter.

As such, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections.

Claims 1, 2, 14 and 16-18 are further amended for greater clarification. Specifically, the term "an average circularity" is amended to --a circularity--. Applicants respectfully submit that the amendment is merely to remove unintentional errors in the claims and that one of the ordinary skill in the art would understand that each particle has "a circularity," instead of "an average circularity."

The Office Action rejects claims 1-18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,746,810 to Suzuki et al. ("Suzuki") in view of each of U.S. Patent No. 6,475,689 to Yamazaki et al. ("Yamazaki"), U.S. Patent No. 6,617,091 to Nishimori et al. ("Nishimori"), and U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0053154 to Tomita et al. ("Tomita"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, that a circularity of a toner contained in at least the supplementary developer is in the range of 0.940 to 0.980; a first ratio of a number of particles is 5% or less, wherein the first ratio is defined as a number of particles comprising a circularity of 0.970 or greater of a group of particles comprising a diameter less than or equal to  $\frac{3}{5}$  of a specific circle-equivalent diameter; and a second ratio of a number of particles is 10% or less, the second ratio is defined as a number of particles comprising a circularity of 0.950 or less of a group of particles comprising a diameter greater than or equal to  $\frac{7}{5}$  times a specific toner circle-equivalent diameter.

Applicants respectfully submit that none of the applied references, alone or in permissible combination, specifically teach or suggest these features. As such, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is patentably distinct from the applied references.

Apparatus claims 14, 17 and 18 are directed to an image forming apparatus and a toner cartridge, respectively, and include features similar to those of claim 1 as described above. Accordingly, claims 14, 17 and 18 are also patentably distinct from the applied references.

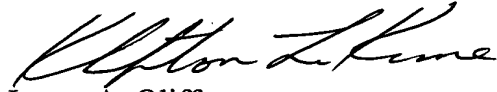
Dependent claims 2-13, 15 and 16 are patentable at least for their dependence on claims 1 and 14, as well as for the additional features they recite.

At least for the reasons described above, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-18 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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